

Unit 33: Volunteering in Public Services

Unit code:	D/600/5381
QCF Level 2:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

This unit aims to help learners identify the different types of volunteering work available and to understand the importance and the benefits of volunteer work. Learners will develop the knowledge and skills required for volunteering work and will take part in a volunteering activity.

● Unit introduction

Why should anyone give up their time to carry out work without getting paid? This unit aims to answer that question and also to enable learners to understand the benefits to be gained by volunteering, and why volunteering is so important to many organisations. Many of these organisations rely on volunteers to supplement the work of their paid staff; others are run and funded solely by volunteers.

Volunteers play a vital part in many public services. The Special Constabulary is the United Kingdom's part-time police force. It is made up of members of the public who volunteer to spend some of their time working alongside regular officers, helping to police their local community. The UK Police 'Special' Constabulary has been in existence for hundreds of years. Working with the Specials could provide valuable experience of some of the life skills required by applicants to the police service.

The Territorial Army is another example where volunteers are trained to work alongside members of the regular services. Using volunteers in this way is a very cost-effective method of increasing human resources.

Through volunteering, learners can develop their existing skills and gain important new skills which are valued by all the services. It is often difficult for public services learners to gain work experience and volunteering is one way of overcoming this. They may also have the opportunity to work alongside people from different cultures and backgrounds, and to work with people with disabilities, which would be useful experience when seeking employment.

In this unit learners will investigate the range of volunteering opportunities available. They will also consider the various skills required for these areas of voluntary work.

Finally, learners must participate in some form of voluntary work in an area of their choice – this could be taking part in a one-off event for charity or carrying out voluntary work for a period of time. They should investigate how to apply for voluntary work and how to carry out any planning involved. There are no minimum hours specified for this activity but tutors should use their discretion as to whether the volunteering activity will allow learners to gain the knowledge and experience necessary to achieve the learning outcomes.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Understand the importance of volunteering in public services
- 2 Know the different types of voluntary work available
- 3 Understand the skills required for voluntary work
- 4 Be able to undertake voluntary work.

Unit content

1 Understand the importance of volunteering in public services

Importance of volunteering to organisations: provide expertise; provide time; provide extra help; provide new ideas; respond in an emergency, raise funds

Benefits of volunteering to learners: gain new life skills, develop existing skills, diversity awareness

2 Know the different types of voluntary work available

Volunteering situations: eg conservation projects, shelters for homeless people, youth clubs, lunch clubs, street collections to raise funds, Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Mountain Rescue; emergency relief work, VSO; cadets, Army, police, fire; hospital visiting, visiting elderly, helping at cadets (police, fire, army, RAF etc), charity fundraising events, charity shops, animal sanctuaries, Mountain Rescue

3 Understand the skills required for voluntary work

Skills for voluntary work: general skills/qualities eg honesty, commitment, reliability, cheerfulness, empathy, reliability, dedication, punctuality; communication skills eg verbal, written, teamworking skills, receiving and giving instructions, confidentiality, being non-judgemental; specific skills or abilities needed for some types of voluntary work eg driving, cooking, computer skills, sign language, physical fitness, first aid

4 Be able to undertake voluntary work

Undertake voluntary work: suitable work which matches skills and interests eg helping at cadets, organising fundraising events, Red Cross Emergency Responders, St John, working in community, working in animal sanctuary, Police Specials, working with people with disabilities, youth work, visiting elderly people, taking part in an organised event, street collecting etc; planning voluntary work; applying for voluntary work

Apply for volunteering work: letter, face to face, telephone, application form, online

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 explain why volunteering is important in the public services [IE, CT]	M1 analyse the importance of volunteering in the public service sector	D1 evaluate the importance of volunteering in the public service sector
P2 discuss the benefits to be gained from volunteering [IE, RL]		
P3 identify the different types of voluntary work available [CT]	M2 compare and contrast the different types of voluntary work available	D2 appraise the different types of voluntary work available
P4 demonstrate skills required for voluntary work [CT, RL, EP]	M3 explain in detail the skills required for voluntary work	
P5 carry out voluntary work. [EP, SM, TW]		

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers CT – creative thinkers	RL – reflective learners TW – team workers	SM – self-managers EP – effective participators
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Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

Delivery of this unit could be enhanced through visiting speakers, both from the public services and from volunteer organisations, to help to make learners aware of the importance of voluntary work and to develop an understanding of the range of skills required to take part. Local volunteer organisations are usually happy to speak to groups of learners about the different volunteering opportunities available. Many national organisations have their own websites, which provide useful information. Learners should also be encouraged to look at case studies or 'role models' who have undertaken various types of voluntary work. Emphasis should be placed on the benefits to learners of undertaking voluntary work, whereby new skills and knowledge can be acquired.

Delivery methods could include learner-centred tasks, such as group work, research tasks and learner-led presentations, to explore a wide range of volunteering situations. Learners could design posters to show the different volunteering opportunities available and they can then be displayed in class. This will help learners to identify the opportunities that exist for voluntary work and help them to choose an area of voluntary work in which they are interested. Websites may be a good source of information.

Learners could work in pairs or groups to determine which skills are common to all areas of voluntary work, such as good communication and teamwork skills and those which are specific to particular volunteer work, for example physical fitness for outdoor work or first aid, or IT skills, and then report back to the rest of the group.

The methods of applying for voluntary work can vary, depending on the work or organisation involved. For instance, application to the Police Specials would require the completion of an application form, offering to work voluntarily for cadets may be done face to face and some voluntary work could be applied for online. Learners should explore the different methods and then complete a letter of application, or download and complete a suitable application form.

Learners have to complete a brief period of voluntary work for learning outcome 4. Tutorials will provide an opportunity for tutors to discuss the interests and skills of individual learners in order to arrange suitable voluntary work. Tutors should give learners guidance about the voluntary work, the skills required, the timescale to complete the work and any planning or supervision arrangements.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Introduction to unit and programme of learning.
Topic – the importance and benefits of volunteering in the public services. Importance to organisations and benefits to learners. Visiting speakers from volunteering organisation to contribute to whole-class discussion about the importance of volunteering to organisations.
Assignment 1: The Importance of Volunteering Learners could create an article for a public services journal which talks about why volunteering is so important in the public sector. P1, P2, M1, D1
Topic – volunteering situations: eg conservation projects, shelters for homeless people, youth clubs, lunch clubs, street collections to raise funds, Red Cross, St John Ambulance, Mountain Rescue; emergency relief work, VSO, cadets, army, police, fire; hospital visiting, visiting elderly, helping at cadets (police, fire, army, RAF, etc), charity fundraising events, charity shops, animal sanctuaries Learners encouraged to visit volunteering organisation to research different volunteering situations.
Assignment 2 – The Types of Voluntary Work Available Give a short talk to your group explaining the many different types of voluntary work available. P3, M2 and D2
Topic – skills required for voluntary work. Visiting speakers invited to discuss required skills for volunteering, case studies, independent research.
Assignment 3: Skills Required for Voluntary Work Produce a poster which illustrates the skills which would be required for different types of voluntary work. P4, M3
Topic – learners apply for and undertake voluntary work which matches their skills and interest. Tutors input and guidance on the choice of voluntary work. Group discussion with tutor input. Discuss different ways of getting involved in volunteer work, including application process – forms, face to face. Learners could also hold mock interviews.
Assignment 5 – Carry out Voluntary Work Learners should produce evidence that they have carried out a volunteering activity and also demonstrated relevant skills. This could be in the form of a logbook or diary with photos, video, supervisor's report. P5
Unit and assignment overview.

Assessment

This unit can be assessed through a series of structured tasks or assignments as shown in the outline learning plan. The unit should be assessed practically wherever possible.

To help with the assessment of learning outcomes 1 and 2, learners could look at different articles and advertisements in public service journals to help them understand the wide range of volunteering opportunities available. Websites and marketing material from volunteering organisations can also be used – case studies would be particularly useful. These sources should also help learners to understand the various benefits to volunteers, as required for P2, and why volunteering is so vital to many organisations, and especially to the public sector, as required for P1.

For M1, learners need to expand on both P1 and P2 and analyse the subject, and further evaluation of this topic is needed for D1.

To achieve P3, learners need to identify some of the many different volunteering roles available, with a view to choosing an area of interest to themselves. For M2 learners should look at some of these roles in more detail and compare and contrast them. For D2, learners are required to appraise the positive and negative aspects of the different volunteering work that is available. For example, some voluntary jobs involve working with children, or with people with disabilities, of whom learners may have little or no experience but that they may be willing to undertake.

For P4, learners have to demonstrate skills required for different types of voluntary work and then demonstrate them in a practical way. Tutor input, websites and case studies could help. Learners should also be encouraged to think about what skills they may already be using in different situations, ie through their studies or part-time work etc and to keep a log or other record of when they have demonstrated them. To achieve M3 learners should explain these skills in greater depth and detail.

For P5, learners should choose and carry out a volunteering activity. They could then complete a log or diary to record the tasks completed in their voluntary work. The log should also record which skills have been demonstrated. Skills demonstrated in other units could also be recorded. Visual evidence such as photographs or videos would enhance this. Activities could also be observed and verified by the supervisor of the voluntary work. Some learners may already be undertaking some form of voluntary work, for example football coaching, helping at cadets. If so, then this can be used as evidence for P5.

Programme of suggested assignments

The table below shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the assessment and grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2, M1, D1	The Importance of Volunteering	You work at a volunteer centre and have been asked to write an article for a public services journal to explain the importance of volunteering in the public services, stating what benefits can be gained by the volunteer.	Article.
P3, M2, D2	The Types of Voluntary Work Available	You and a colleague have been asked to give a short talk to public services learners which describes the many different volunteering opportunities available.	Tutor/peer assessment of talk.
P4, M3	Skills Required for Voluntary Work	As part of your role at the volunteer centre you are asked to produce a poster which illustrates the skills required for different volunteer work.	Tutor assessment of poster.
P5	Carry out Voluntary Work	Choose an area of voluntary work and discuss this with your tutor. You should carry out this work and produce suitable evidence.	Diary/log, observation, photographs, videos.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Public Services sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the Public Services suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Working as a Volunteer	Public Service Skills	
	Adventurous Activities and Teamwork for the Public Services	
	Improving Health and Fitness for Entry to the Uniformed Public Services	

Essential resources

Sufficient library resources, including appropriate books, journals, careers leaflets and video, should be available to enable learners to achieve this unit.

Employer engagement and vocational contexts

Learners could get involved in the local volunteering organisations such as the Red Cross, Age UK, Macmillan Cancer support and Barnardo's. Links can be made with these organisations and the local council to assist learners in carrying out voluntary work.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Ford L – *The Guardian Guide to Volunteering* (Guardian Newspapers, 2007) ISBN 9780852650677

Hardy R – *The Virgin Guide to Volunteering: Give Your time and Get Work and Life Experience in Return* (Virgin Books, 2004) ISBN 9780753508572

Journals

Volunteer journal

Websites

Army	www.army.mod.uk
British Red Cross Volunteers	www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer
Government website giving advice on work experience and volunteering	www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/Workandcareers/workexperienceandvolunteering
Police Special Constabulary	www.policespentials.com
RAF Air Cadets	www.raf.mod.uk/aircadets/
St John Ambulance Volunteers	www.sja.org.uk/sja/volunteer.aspx
Territorial Army	www.army.mod.uk/join/20008.aspx
Volunteering England	www.volunteering.org.uk
Volunteering Inspired	www.vinspired.com
VSO	www.vso.org.uk
Worldwide Helpers	www.worldwidehelpers.org

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	explaining why volunteering is so important discussing the benefits of volunteering
Creative thinkers	identifying the different skills used in volunteering identifying the volunteering opportunities available
Reflective learners	discussing the benefits of the skills required demonstrating the skills required
Team workers	carrying out volunteering work
Self-managers	carrying out voluntary work
Effective participators	undertaking voluntary work.

Although PLTS are identified within this unit as an inherent part of the assessment criteria, there are further opportunities to develop a range of PLTS through various approaches to teaching and learning.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	carrying out own practical research exploring own stimulus materials
Creative thinkers	adapting own ideas for written and verbal work
Reflective learners	reflecting on own progress and receiving feedback on own work
Team workers	taking responsibility for their work and sharing ideas and responsibilities when working in a group
Self-managers	seeking out challenges or new responsibilities and demonstrating flexibility setting priorities responding positively to change, seeking advice and support
Effective participators	working with others.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Use ICT systems	
Select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs	carrying out research when looking for volunteering roles
Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system they have used	carrying out research producing written work such as reports, journal articles, logs etc
Manage information storage to enable efficient retrieval	saving work securely
Follow and understand the need for safety and security practices	using passwords etc
Troubleshoot	
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	carrying out research on volunteering situations
Access, search for, select and use ICT-based information and evaluate its fitness for purpose	carrying out research
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	producing written work such as journal articles and advertisements
Bring together information to suit content and purpose	producing written work such as journal articles and advertisements
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	producing written work such as journal articles and advertisements
Evaluate the selection and use of ICT tools and facilities used to present information	producing written work
Select and use ICT to communicate and exchange information safely, responsibly and effectively including storage of messages and contact lists	producing written work

Skill	When learners are ...
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	giving a verbal presentation
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	carrying out research
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	producing a magazine article, advertisements